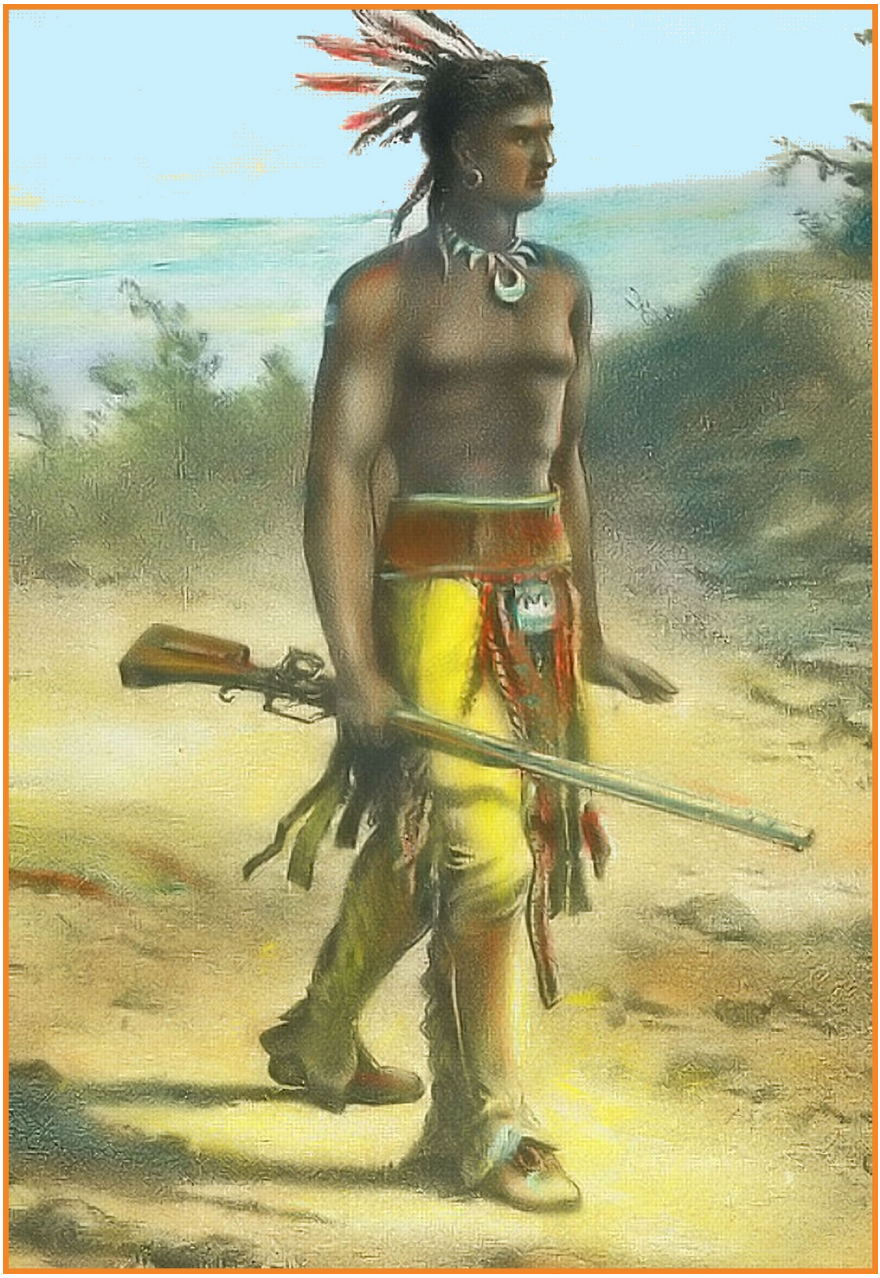


Tisquantum - Squanto

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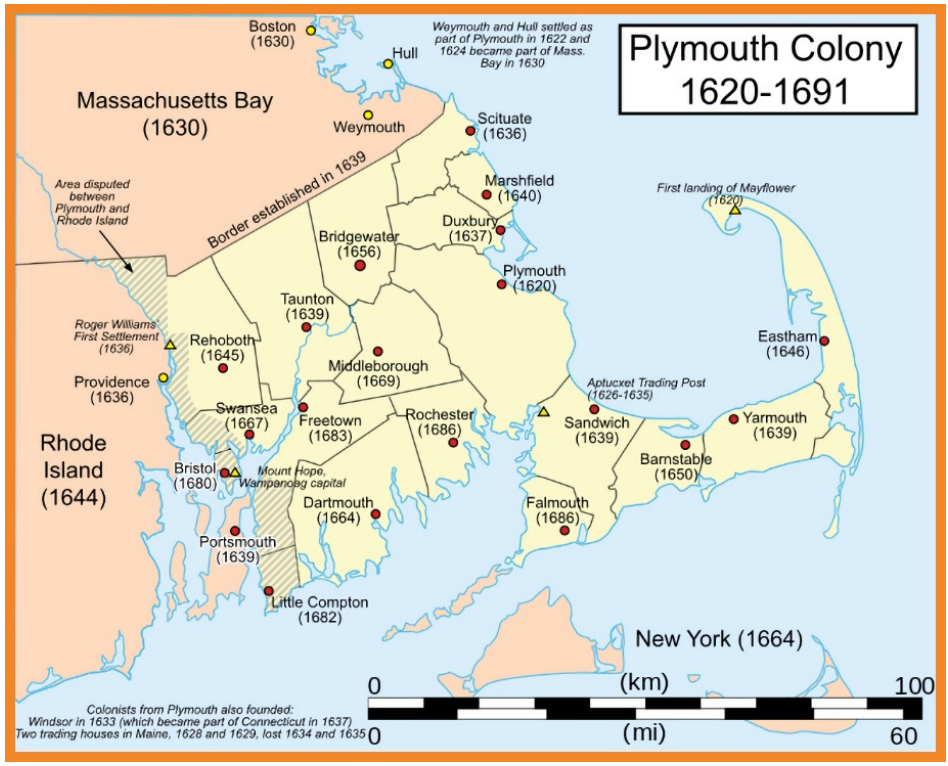
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Early Life

Tisquantum, more commonly known as Squanto, was a member of the Patuxet tribe best known for being an early liaison between the Native American population in Southern New England and the Mayflower Pilgrims who made their settlement at the site of Tisquantum's former summer village. Almost nothing is known of Tisquantum's life before his first contact with Europeans. First-hand descriptions of him written between 1618 and 1622 do not remark on his youth or age.



The tribes who lived in southern New England at the beginning of the 17th century referred to themselves as Ninnimissinuok, a variation of the Narragansett word Ninnimissinnûwock meaning "people" and signifying "familiarity and shared identity". Tisquantum's tribe of the Patuxets occupied the coastal area west of Cape Cod Bay, and he told an English trader that the Patuxets once numbered 2,000. The term patuxet refers to the site of Plymouth, Massachusetts and means "at the little falls".

The annual growing season in southern Maine and Canada was not long enough to produce maize harvests, and the Indian tribes in those areas were required to live a fairly nomadic existence, while the southern New England Algonquins were "sedentary cultivators" by contrast. They grew enough for their own winter needs and for trade, especially to northern tribes, and enough to relieve the colonists' distress for many years when their harvests were insufficient. The groups that made up the Ninnimissinuok were presided over by one or two sachems. The chief functions of the sachems were to allocate land for cultivation, to manage the trade with other sachems or more distant tribes, to dispense justice (including capital punishment), to collect and store tribute from harvests and hunts, and leading in war. In addition to the class of commoners (sanops), there were outsiders who attached themselves to a tribe. They had few rights except the expectation of protection against any common enemy.

The Ninnimissinuok had sporadic contact with European explorers for nearly a century before the landing of the Mayflower in 1620. The fishermen off the Newfoundland banks from Bristol, Normandy, and Brittany began making annual spring visits beginning as early as 1581 to bring cod to Southern Europe. These early encounters had long-term effects. Europeans might have introduced diseases for which the Indian population had no resistance. When the Mayflower arrived, the Pilgrims discovered that an entire village was devoid of inhabitants. European fur trappers traded with different tribes, and this encouraged intertribal rivalries and hostilities.



Squanto



The Patuxet Pilgrim

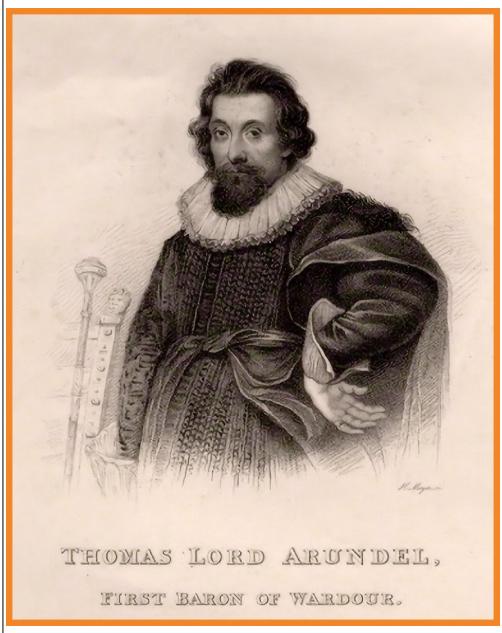
The First Kidnappings

In 1605, George Weymouth set out on an expedition to explore the possibility of settlement in upper New England, sponsored by Henry Wriothesley and Thomas Arundell. They had a chance encounter with a hunting party, then decided to kidnap a number of Indians. The capture of Indians was "a matter of great importance for the full accomplement of our voyage".



(**Note**) *Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton. Shakespeare's two narrative poems, "Venus and Adonis" and "The Rape of Lucrece", were dedicated to Southampton, who is frequently identified as the "Fair Youth" of Shakespeare's Sonnets. He took a considerable share in promoting the colonial enterprises of the time, and was an active member of the Virginia Company's governing council.*

(**Note**) *Thomas Arundell, 1st Baron Arundell of Wardour. In March 1605 Arundell and Southampton sent Captain George Weymouth to found a colony in Virginia. According to Akrigg, 'the whole voyage may best be regarded as a first attempt to found an American colony that would be an asylum for English Catholics', and that Arundell was the principal impetus behind the Weymouth voyage.*



They took five captives to England and gave three to Sir Ferdinando Gorges. Gorges was an investor in the Weymouth voyage and became the chief promoter of the scheme when Arundell withdrew from the project. Gorges wrote of his delight in Weymouth's kidnapping, and named Tisquantum as one of the three given to him.



*(**Note**) Sir Ferdinando Gorges was a naval and military commander and governor of the important port of Plymouth in England. His early involvement in English trade with and settlement of North America as well as his efforts in founding the Province of Maine in 1622 earned him the title of the "Father of English Colonization in North America," even though Gorges himself never set foot in the New World.*

Captain George Weymouth, having failed at finding a Northwest Passage, happened into a River on the Coast of America, called Pemmaquid, from whence he brought five of the Natives, three of whose names were Manida, Sellwarroes, and Tasquantum, whom I seized upon, they were all of one Nation, but of severall parts, and severall Families; This accident must be acknowledged the meanes under God of putting on foote, and giving life to all our Plantations.

(**Note**) *Circumstantial evidence makes nearly impossible the claim that it was Tisquantum among the three taken by Gorges, Adams maintains that "it is not supposable that a member of the Pokánoket tribe would be passing the summer of 1605 in a visit among his deadly enemies the Tarratines, whose language was not even intelligible to him ... and be captured as one of a party of them in the way described by Rosier". and no modern historian entertains this as fact.*



George Weymouth was an English explorer of the area now occupied by the state of Maine. In March 1605 Thomas Arundell, 1st Baron Arundell of Wardour and Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton sent Captain Weymouth to found a colony in Virginia under the ruse of searching again for a northwest passage. Weymouth sailed from England on March 31, 1605 on the ship Archangel and landed near Monhegan off the coast of Maine on May 17, 1605.

On May 30, 1605, as the ship was anchored in Muscongus Bay and the captain and 13 men had gone off to explore. The remaining crew had a chance encounter that afternoon with a hunting party, developed a sign language with them, and over several days encouraged their trust with gifts and then trade.

On his return, Weymouth joined in the hospitality, offering the Natives bread and peas which they were unfamiliar with and amazing them with a sword magnetized with a lodestone. After three days of hospitality and trading, Rosier suggested that the crew visit their homes to trade. Rosier wrote that cultivating their trust was part of the plan to colonize once they had decided that the land was prime for European settlement. On June 3, as they themselves had suggested, the English set out to visit their homes. They became skittish when a large assembly came to escort them and decided not to go. Rosier claimed that they then decided to kidnap a number of Natives, from their belief that the Natives intended mischief.

These things considered, we began to joyne them in the ranke of other Salvages, who have beene by travellers in most discoveries found very trecherous; never attempting mischiefe, until by some remisnesse, fit opportunity affordeth them certain ability to execute the same. Wherefore after good advise taken we determined so soone as we could to take some of them, least (being suspicious we had discovered their plots) they should absent themselves from us.

On the next day, they abducted five Natives, three by duplicity and two by having the crewmen force the Natives onto the lower decks. In discussing the forcible kidnapping of two Natives, Rosier noted that the kidnapping had been long planned, saying that they would have resorted to harsher methods to secure their captives because the capture of Natives was "a matter of great importance for the full accomplement of our voyage". The idea was undoubtedly conceived by the entrepreneurs back in England as a way to become familiar with the land and inhabitants that they intended to colonize.



Capt Weymouth impresses Indians with a loadstone magnet



Squanto



The Patuxet Pilgrim

Abduction Of Squanto

In 1614, an English expedition headed by John Smith sailed along the coast of Maine and Massachusetts Bay collecting fish and furs. Smith returned to England in one of the vessels and left Thomas Hunt in command of the second ship. Hunt was to complete the haul of cod and proceed to Málaga, Spain, where there was a market for dried fish, but Hunt decided to enhance the value of his shipment by adding human cargo. He sailed to Plymouth harbor ostensibly to trade with the village of Patuxet, where he lured 20 Indians aboard his vessel under promise of trade, including Tisquantum (Squanto). Once aboard, they were confined and the ship sailed across Cape Cod Bay where Hunt abducted seven more from the Nausets. He then set sail for Málaga.



(**Note**) *John Smith was an English soldier, explorer, colonial governor, Admiral of New England, and author. He played an important role in the establishment of the colony at Jamestown, Virginia and led an exploration along the rivers of Virginia and the Chesapeake Bay, during which he became the first English explorer to map the Chesapeake Bay area. Later, he explored and mapped the coast of New England.*

John Smith and Ferdinando Gorges both disapproved of Thomas Hunt's decision to enslave the Indians. Gorges worried about the prospect of "a warre now new begun between the inhabitants of those parts, and us", although he seemed mostly concerned about whether this event had upset his gold-finding plans with Epenow on Martha's Vineyard. Smith suggested that Hunt got his just desserts because "this wilde act kept him ever after from any more imploiment to those parts."



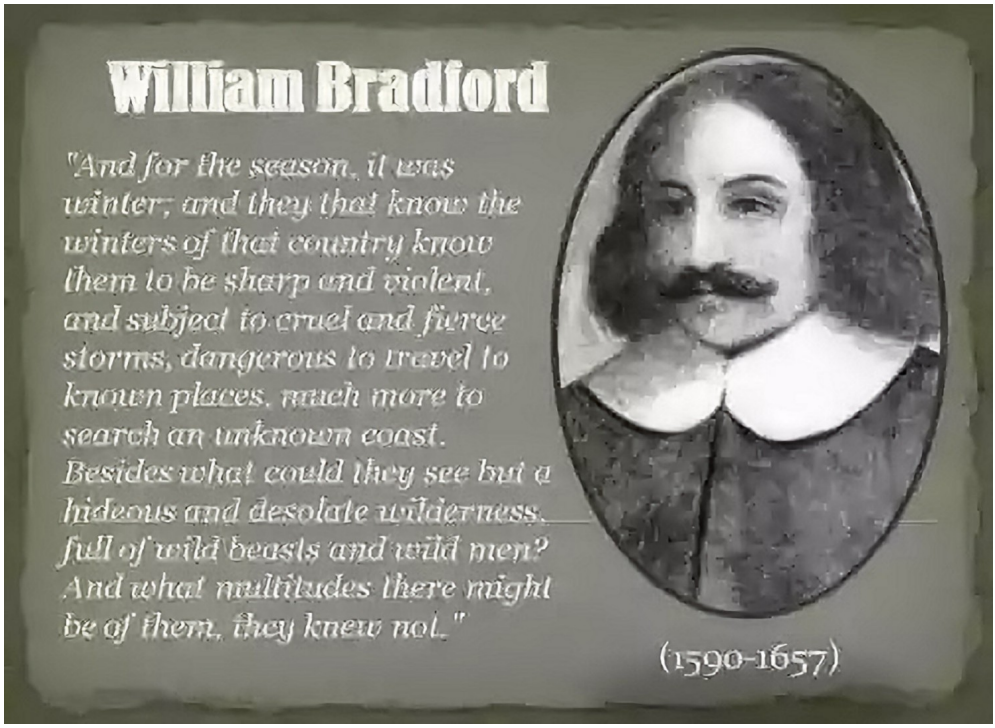
Málaga 1572, 40 years before Squanto was delivered there

According to Gorges, Hunt took the Indians to the Strait of Gibraltar where he sold as many as he could. But the "Friers of those parts" discovered what he was doing, and they took the remaining Indians to be "instructed in the Christian Faith; and so disappointed this unworthy fellow of his hopes of gaine".

(**Note**) *Franciscan friars arrived in Gibraltar during the reign of Charles I of Spain. They were granted a plot of land in the area known at the time as La Turba where the poorer people of Gibraltar lived. A church and a friary were built in 1531. After the capture of Gibraltar by an Anglo-Dutch fleet in the name of the Archduke Charles, the Franciscan friars did not follow the exodus of the Spanish population and remained in Gibraltar. The convent is supposedly haunted by the ghost of a nun, known as "Lady in Grey" who is said to roam the corridor outside one of the guest rooms. It is said that she considers it to be her room, as she was walled up alive in it. There are various versions of the "Grey Lady" story, the most popular being that she was the daughter of an affluent Spanish family who had married against her father's wishes.*

When he learnt of it, he placed her in the "Convent of Santa Clara" situated in the Main Street, where under the eyes of the Mother Superior, the girl was forced to take her vows and become a nun. Her lover was not discouraged; he joined the Franciscan Order and settled in the Convent. The couple are said to have met in the confessional of the King's Chapel where they hatched plans for their escape.On the night of their escape they made their way to the harbour where a boat was waiting for them. However, the alarm was raised and in the ensuing chase the lover fell into the water and drowned. The bride was arrested for breaking her vows and as punishment was walled up alive in one of the rooms in the Convent.

No records show how long Tisquantum lived in Spain, what he did there, or how he "got away for England", as historian William Bradford puts it.



(**Note**) *William Bradford was a leading figure in the Puritans' Separatist movement. He and other congregants eventually sailed from England on the Mayflower to establish a colony in Plymouth, Massachusetts, where Bradford became longtime governor after a devastating winter. He died in 1657, with much of the history of the settlement recorded in his two-volume work, Of Plymouth Plantation.*

Reports say that he spent four years in slavery in Spain and was then smuggled aboard a ship belonging to Guy's colony, taken to Spain, and then to Newfoundland. Smith attested that Tisquantum lived in England "a good time", although he does not say what he was doing there. Plymouth Governor William Bradford knew him best and recorded that he lived in Cornhill, London with "Master John Slanie". Slany was a merchant and shipbuilder who became another of the merchant adventurers of London hoping to make money from colonizing projects in America and was an investor in the East India Company.



*(**Note**) In 1608 John Guy and other members of the Society of Merchant Venturers, decided to act upon a letter received by the mayor from Chief Justice Sir John Popham concerning the colonisation of Newfoundland. Since John Cabot had discovered the island and Sir Humphrey Gilbert had formally taken possession of it for Elizabeth I of England, the merchants of the city had a special interest in Newfoundland, but there had been little attempt to exploit and colonise the island. The merchants decided not to embark on the scheme without the co-operation of King James VI of Scotland and Elizabeth I of England, which was forthcoming.*

Squanto spent at least six weeks in the dank, dark belly of a ship, chained to his brothers, given just enough fresh water, raw fish and stale bread to keep them alive. Reports say that he spent four years in slavery in Spain and was then smuggled aboard a ship belonging to Guy's colony, taken to England, and then to Newfoundland. Smith attested that Tisquantum lived in England "a good time", although he does not say what he was doing there. Plymouth Governor William Bradford knew him best and recorded that he lived in Cornhill, London with "Master John Slanie". Slany was a merchant and shipbuilder who became another of the merchant adventurers of London hoping to make money from colonizing projects in America and was an investor in the East India Company.

Squanto likely did all he could to appease Slaney, who was a merchant and shipbuilder and also a grantee of the land patent issued to the Newfoundland Company. Squanto bided his time, charming his host and earning celebrity as a novelty. The presence of a Native man fascinated Londoners. Not only were Native men set apart by their bronze skin, chiseled features and dark eyes, but they were virtual giants to the small-statured Englishmen. Squanto's faithfulness paid off. Slaney allowed Squanto to travel as a guide to Newfoundland, where he met Thomas Dermer, an English explorer who brought him home in 1619.

John Slaney was the treasurer of the Newfoundland Company which had managed to place a colony at Cupper's Cove (Cupids), Newfoundland in 1610; he employed Tisquantum, presumably as an interpreter and as an expert on North American natural resources. He was sent to Newfoundland, and worked there with Captain John Mason, governor of the Newfoundland Colony.

While in Newfoundland, Tisquantum encountered a ship's captain by the name of Thomas Dermer, who had worked with Captain John Smith, perhaps even on the 1614 mapping expedition in which Squanto had been originally taken. Dermer was employed by the New England Company, headed by Sir Ferdinando Gorges; they still had hopes to profit from beaver trade with the Indians of Massachusetts: but this would not be possible as long as hostilities remained.

Thomas Dermer recognized that Tisquantum, who had now been living with Englishmen for a number of years, could act as an interpreter and peacemaker between the English and the still-enraged Indians of Patuxet and Nauset. He sent a letter off to Sir Ferdinando Gorges expressing the good use Tisquantum could be put to, and Gorges had them come back to England to discuss their plans.

In 1619, Captain Dermer and Tisquantum set off for New England, to attempt to make peace and re-establish trade with the Indians, and to map out the natural resources that could be exploited by the Company. But upon arriving, they discovered Tisquantum's town, all the Patuxet, were dead from the plague. He did make contact with Massasoit, and his brother Quadequina, the heads of the Wampanoag Confederation, and in the absence of his own people he took up residence with them. Their plan to make peace foiled by the fact that Tisquantum's tribe had been completely wiped out, Dermer continued on to see if he could make peace with the Nauset. He was attacked and taken captive. Tisquantum, hearing about the incident, came to Dermer's rescue and negotiated his release. Dermer would continue on south without Tisquantum, where he was attacked again at Martha's Vineyards. Captain Dermer would die of the wounds after reaching Jamestown, Virginia.



Massasoit was the leader of the Wampanoag confederacy which included Squanto's Patuxet tribe.



Plymouth Colony

The Massachusett Indians were north of Plymouth Colony, led by Chief Massasoit, and the Pokanoket tribe were north, east, and south. Tisquantum was living with the Pokanokets, as his native tribe of the Patuxets had been effectively wiped out prior to the arrival of the Mayflower; indeed, the Pilgrims had established their former habitation as the site of Plymouth Colony. The Narragansett tribe inhabited Rhode Island.

Massasoit was faced with the dilemma whether to form an alliance with the Plymouth colonists, who might protect him from the Narragansetts, or try to put together a tribal coalition to drive out the colonists. To decide the issue, according to William Bradford's account, "they got all the Powachs of the country, for three days together in a horrid and devilish manner, to curse and execrate them with their conjurations, which assembly and service they held in a dark and dismal swamp."

Nathaniel Philbrick in “Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War” sees this as a convocation of shamans brought together to drive the colonists from the shores by supernatural means. Tisquantum had lived in England, and he told Massassoit "what wonders he had seen" there. He urged Massasoit to become friends with the Plymouth colonists, because his enemies would then be "Constrained to bowe to him". Also connected to Massasoit was Samoset, a minor Abenakki sachem who hailed from the Muscongus Bay area of Maine. Samoset (a mispronunciation of Somerset) had learned English in England as a captive of the Merchant Tailors Guild.



Samoset comes "boldly" into Plymouth settlement

On Friday, March 16, the settlers were conducting military training when Samoset "boldly came alone" into the settlement. The colonists were initially alarmed, but he immediately set their fears at ease by asking for beer. He spent the day giving them intelligence of the surrounding tribes, then stayed for the night, leaving the next morning. The next day (Sunday), Samoset returned with five men all bearing deer skins and one cat skin.

The settlers entertained them but refused to trade with them because it was the Sabbath, although they encouraged them to return with more furs. All left but Samoset who lingered until Wednesday, feigning illness. He returned once more on Thursday, March 22, this time with Tisquantum. The men brought important news: Massasoit, his brother Quadrquina, and all of their men were close by. After an hour's discussion, the sachem and his train of 60 men appeared on Strawberry Hill.

Both the colonists and Massasoit's men were unwilling to make the first move, but Tisquantum shuttled between the groups and effected the simple protocol which permitted Edward Winslow to approach the sachem. Winslow, with Tisquantum as translator, proclaimed the loving and peaceful intentions of King James and the desire of their governor to trade and make peace with him. After Massasoit ate, Miles Standish led him to a house which was furnished with pillows and a rug. Governor Carver then came "with Drumme and Trumpet after him" to meet Massasoit. The parties ate together, then negotiated a treaty of peace and mutual defense between the Plymouth settlers and the Pokanoket people. According to Bradford, "all the while he sat by the Governour, he trembled for feare". Massasoit's followers applauded the treaty, and the peace terms were kept by both parties during Massasoit's lifetime.



Edward Winslow

(**Note**) *Edward Winslow (18 October 1595 – 8 May 1655) was a Separatist who traveled on the Mayflower in 1620. He was one of several senior leaders on the ship and also later at Plymouth Colony. Both Edward Winslow and his brother, Gilbert Winslow signed the Mayflower Compact. In Plymouth he served in a number of governmental positions such as assistant governor, three times was governor and also was the colony's agent in London. In early 1621 he had been one of several key leaders on whom Governor Bradford depended after the death of John Carver. He was the author of several important pamphlets, including Good Newes from New England and co-wrote with William Bradford the historic Mourt's Relation, which ends with an account of the First Thanksgiving and the abundance of the New World. In 1655 he died of fever while on an English naval expedition in the Caribbean against the Spanish. He is the only original Plymouth colonist with an extant portrait painted from life.*

The Mayflower was an English ship that transported a group of English families, known today as the Pilgrims, from England to the New World in 1620. After a grueling 10 weeks at sea, Mayflower, with 102 passengers and a crew of about 30, reached America, dropping anchor near the tip of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, on November 21, 1620.

Starting 1608, a group of English families left England for the Netherlands, where they could worship freely. By 1620, the community determined to cross the Atlantic for America, which they considered a "new Promised Land," where they would establish Plymouth Colony.

The Pilgrims had originally hoped to reach America by early October using two ships, but delays and complications meant they could use only one, Mayflower. Arriving in November, they had to survive unprepared through a harsh winter. As a result, only half of the original Pilgrims survived the first winter at Plymouth.

Without the help of local Indigenous peoples to teach them food gathering and other survival skills, all of the colonists might have perished. The following year, those 53 who survived, celebrated the colony's first fall harvest along with 90 Wampanoag Native American people, an occasion declared in centuries later the first American Thanksgiving.



Squanto



The Patuxet Pilgrim

Guide To Frontier Survival



Massasoit and his men left the day after the treaty, but Samoset and Tisquantum remained. Tisquantum and Bradford developed a close friendship, and Bradford relied on him heavily during his years as governor of the colony.

Bradford considered him "a special instrument sent of God for their good beyond their expectation". Tisquantum instructed them in survival skills and acquainted them with their environment.

"He directed them how to set their corn, where to take fish, and to procure other commodities, and was also their pilot to bring them to unknown places for their profit, and never left them till he died."



The day after Massasoit left Plymouth, Tisquantum spent the day at Eel River treading eels out of the mud with his feet. The bucketful of eels he brought back were "fat and sweet". Collection of eels became part of the settlers' annual practice. But Bradford makes special mention of Tisquantum's instruction concerning local horticulture. He had arrived at the time of planting for that year's crops, and Bradford said that "Squanto stood them in great stead, showing them both the manner how to set it, and after how to dress and tend it." Bradford wrote that Sqanto showed them how to fertilize exhausted soil:

He told them, except they got fish and set with it [corn seed] in these old grounds it would come to nothing. And he showed them that in the middle of April they should have store enough [of fish] come up the brook by which they began to build, and taught them how to take it, and where to get other provisions necessary for them. All of which they found true by trial and experience.

Edward Winslow made the same point about the value of Indian cultivation methods in a letter to England at the end of the year:

“We set the last Spring some twentie Acres of Indian Corne, and sowed some six Acres of Barly and Pease; and according to the manner of the Indians, we manured our ground with Herings or rather Shadds, which we have in great abundance, and take with great ease at our doores. Our Corn did prove well, & God be praysed, we had a good increase of Indian-Corne, and our Barly indifferent good, but our Pease were not worth the gathering, for we feared they were too late sowne”.

The method shown by Tisquantum became the regular practice of the settlers. Tisquantum also showed the Plymouth colonists how they could obtain pelts with the "few trifling commodities they brought with them at first". Bradford reported that there was not "any amongst them that ever saw a beaver skin till they came here and were informed by Squanto". Fur trading became an important way for the colonists to pay off their financial debt to their financial sponsors in England.

Role In Settler Diplomacy. Thomas Morton stated that Massasoit was freed as a result of the peace treaty and "suffered [Tisquantum] to live with the English", and Tisquantum remained loyal to the colonists. One commentator has suggested that the loneliness occasioned by the wholesale extinction of his people was the motive for his attachment to the Plymouth settlers. Another has suggested that it was self-interest that he conceived while in the captivity of the Pokanoket. The settlers were forced to rely on Tisquantum because he was the only means by which they could communicate with the surrounding Indians, and he was involved in every contact for the 20 months that he lived with them.

*(**Note**) The economy of Plymouth Colony was based on agriculture, fishing, whaling, timber and fur. The Plymouth Company investors initially invested about £1200 to £1600 in the colony before the Mayflower even sailed. The colonists had to pay this money back over seven years by harvesting supplies and shipping them back to the in-*

vestors in England to be sold. Each investor in the Plymouth Company was issued shares worth £10 and each adult colonist received one share and were given options to purchase more shares later on. For the first seven years, everything was to remain in the "common stock" which was owned by all the shareholders. The common stock helped supply the colonists with things like food, tools and clothing. At the end of the seven years, the shareholders would divide the profits and capital (which included houses, land and goods) equally.

The fur trade industry was the colony's economic salvation. For the first few years that the colony existed, the colonists struggled to make enough money to pay the investors back. In fact, they had to ask for more money just to keep the colony running and by the mid to late 1620s, they were deeply in debt to the investors.

To help pay down the debt they still owed, the colonists established a beaver fur trading base in Kennebec, Maine by 1625. Beaver were plentiful in Maine where the local Native-Americans tribe had hunted them for generations.

This fur trading business was very successful for the colonists and quickly became an essential part of their economy. Their success in this trade continued well into the 1630s and 1640s but by the 1650s beaver became scarce in New England.

Unable to expand their hunting grounds due to pressure from other colonies, the colonists finally sold their land in Kennebec in the 1660s and fish and lumber eventually became the staples of the colony's economy.



Mission to Pokanoket

Plymouth Colony decided in June that a mission to Massasoit in Pokatoket would enhance their security and reduce visits by Indians who drained their food resources. Winslow wrote that they wanted to ensure that the peace treaty was still valued by the Pokanoket and to reconnoiter the surrounding country and the strength of the various tribes. They also hoped to show their willingness to repay the grain that they took on Cape Cod the previous winter, in the words of Winslow to "make satisfaction for some conceived injuries to be done on our parts".

Governor Bradford selected Edward Winslow and Stephen Hopkins to make the journey with Tisquantum. They set off on July 2 carrying a "Horse-mans coat" as a gift for Massasoit made of red cotton and trimmed "with a slight lace".

They also took a copper chain and a message expressing their desire to continue and strengthen the peace between the two peoples and explaining the purpose of the chain. The colony was uncertain of their first harvest, and they requested that Massasoit restrain his people from visiting Plymouth as frequently as they had—though they wished always to entertain any guest of Massasoit.

So if he gave anyone the chain, they would know that the visitor was sent by him and they would always receive him. The message also attempted to explain the settlers' conduct on Cape Cod when they took some corn, and they requested that he send his men to the Nauset to

express the settlers' wish to make restitution. They departed at 9 a.m., and traveled for two days meeting friendly Indians along the way.

When they arrived at Pokanoket, Massasoit had to be sent for, and Winslow and Hopkins gave him a salute with their muskets when he arrived, at Tisquantum's suggestion. Massasoit was grateful for the coat and assured them on all points that they made.

He assured them that his 30 tributary villages would remain in peace and would bring furs to Plymouth. The colonists stayed for two days, then sent Tisquantum off to the various villages to seek trading partners for the English while they returned to Plymouth.

Mission to the Nauset. Winslow writes that young John Billington had wandered off and had not returned for five days. Bradford sent word to Massasoit, who made inquiry and found that the child had wandered into a Manumett village, who turned him over to the Nausets. Ten settlers set out and took Tisquantum as a translator and Tokamahamon as "a special friend," in Winslow's words.

They sailed to Cummaquid by evening and spent the night anchored in the bay. In the morning, the two Indians on board were sent to speak to two Indians who were lobstering. They were told that the boy was at Nauset, and the Cape Cod Indians invited all the men to take food with them.

The Plymouth colonists waited until the tide allowed the boat to reach the shore, and then they were escorted to sachem Iyanough who was in his mid-20s and "very personable, gentle, courteous, and fayre conditioned, indeed not like a Savage", in Winslow's words.

The colonists were lavishly entertained, and Iyanough even agreed to accompany them to the Nausets. While in this village, they met an old woman, "no lesse then an hundred yeeres old", who wanted to see the colonists, and she told them of how her two sons were kidnapped by Hunt at the same time that Tisquantum was, and she had not seen them since.

Winslow assured her that they would never treat Indians that way and "gave her some small trifles, which somewhat appeased her". After their lunch, the settlers took the boat to Nauset with the sachem and two of his band, but the tide prevented the boat from reaching shore, so the colonists sent Inyanough and Tisquantum to meet Nauset sachem Aspinet.

The colonists remained in their shallop and Nauset men came "very thick" to entreat them to come ashore, but Winslow's party was afraid because this was the very spot of the First Encounter.

One of the Indians whose corn they had taken the previous winter came out to meet them, and they promised to reimburse him. That night, the sachem came with more than 100 men, the colonists estimated, and he bore the boy out to the shallop. The colonists gave Aspinet a knife and one to the man who carried the boy to the boat. By this, Winslow considered that "they made peace with us."

The Nausets departed, but the colonists learned (probably from Tisquantum) that the Narragansetts had attacked the Pokanokets and taken Massasoit. This caused great alarm because their own settlement was not well guarded given that so many were on this mission.

The men tried to set off immediately, but they had no fresh water. After stopping again at Iyanough's village, they set off for Plymouth. This mission resulted in a working relationship between the Plymouth settlers and the Cape Cod Indians, both the Nausets and the Cummaquid, and Winslow attributed that outcome to Tisquantum.

Bradford wrote that the Indians whose corn they had taken the previous winter came and received compensation, and peace generally prevailed.



JOHN BILLINGTON BROUGHT ON THE SHOULDERS OF AN INDIAN



Action to save Tisquantum in Nemasket

The men returned to Plymouth after rescuing the Billington boy, and it was confirmed to them that Massasoit had been ousted or taken by the Narragansetts. They also learned that Corbitant, a Pocasset sachem formerly tributary to Massasoit, was at Nemasket attempting to pry that band away from Massasoit.



Corbitant was reportedly also railing against the peace initiatives that the Plymouth settlers had just had with the Cummaquid and the Nauset. Tisquantum was an object of Corbitant's ire because of his role in mediating peace with the Cape Cod Indians, but also because he was the principal means by which the settlers could communicate with the Indians. "If he were dead, the English had lost their tongue," he reportedly said. Hobomok was a Pokanoket pniese residing with the colonists, and he had also been threatened for his loyalty to Massasoit.

Tisquantum and Hobomok were evidently too frightened to seek out Massasoit, and instead went to Nemasket to find out what they could. Tokamahamon, however, went looking for Massasoit. Corbitant discovered Tisquantum and Hobomok at Nemasket and captured them.

He held Tisquantum with a knife to his breast, but Hobomok broke free and ran to Plymouth to alert them, thinking that Tisquantum had died.

Governor Bradford organized an armed task force of about a dozen men under the command of Miles Standish, and they set off before daybreak on August 14 under the guidance of Hobomok. The plan was to march the 14 miles to Nemasket, rest, and then take the village unawares in the night.

The surprise was total, and the villagers were terrified. The colonists could not make the Indians understand that they were only looking for Corbitant, and there were "three sore wounded" trying to escape the house. The colonists realized that Tisquantum was unharmed and staying in the village, and that Corbitant and his men had returned to Pocaset. The colonists searched the dwelling, and Hobomok got on top of it and called for Tisquantum and Tisquantum, both of whom came. The settlers commandeered the house for the night.

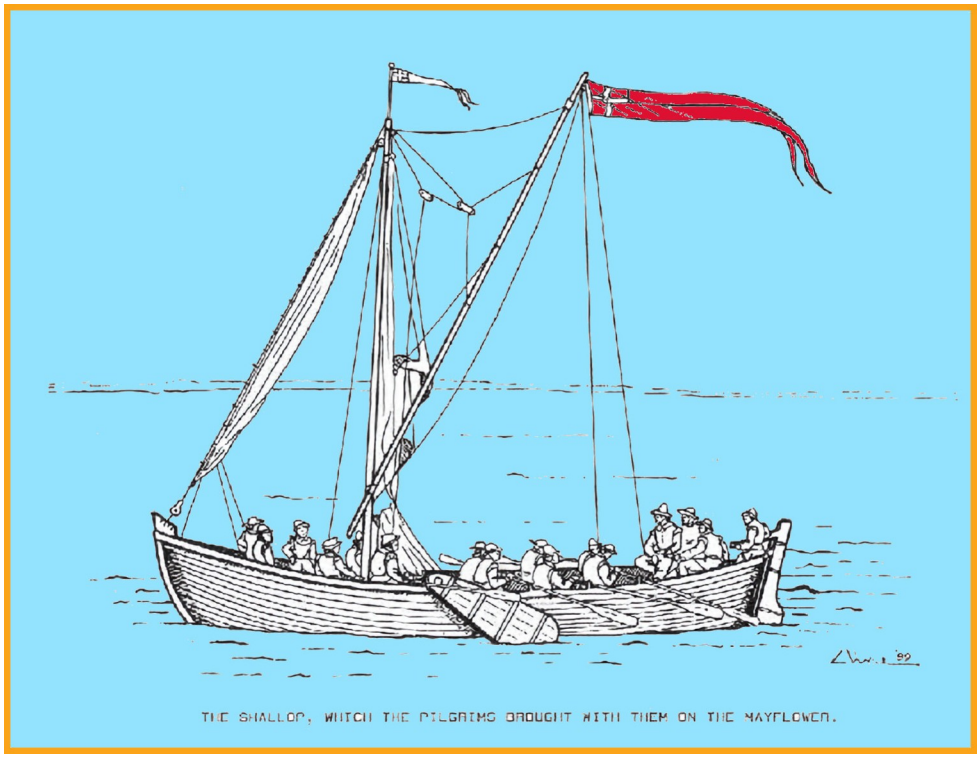
The next day, they explained to the village that they were interested only in Corbitant and those supporting him. They warned that they would exact retribution if Corbitant continued threatening them, or if Massasoit did not return from the Narragansetts, or if anyone attempted harm to any of Massasoit's subjects, including Tisquantum and Hobomok. They then marched back to Plymouth with Nemasket villagers helping bear their equipment.

Bradford wrote that this action resulted in a firmer peace, and that "divers sachems" congratulated the settlers and more came to terms with them. Even Corbitant made his peace through Massasoit. Nathaniel Morton later recorded that nine sub-sachems came to Plymouth on September 13, 1621, and signed a document declaring themselves "Loyal Subjects of King James, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland".



Mission to the Massachuset people

The Plymouth colonists resolved to meet with the Massachusetts Indians who had frequently threatened them. On August 18, a crew of ten settlers set off around midnight, with Tisquantum and two other Indians as interpreters, hoping to arrive before daybreak. But they misjudged the distance and were forced to anchor off shore and stay in the shallop over the next night.



Once ashore, they found a woman coming to collect the trapped lobsters, and she told them where the villagers were. Tisquantum was sent to make contact, and they discovered that the sachem presided over a considerably reduced band of followers. His name was Obbatinewat, and he was a tributary of Massasoit. He explained that his current location within Boston harbor was not a permanent residence since he moved regularly to avoid the Tarentines and the Squa Sachim (the widow of Nanepashemet). Obbatinewat agreed to submit himself to King James in exchange for the colonists' promise to protect him from his enemies. He also took them to see the squa sachem across the Massachusetts Bay.

(**Note**) *Obbatinewat was a 17th-century Wampanoag sachem who lived in what is now Massachusetts. Mourt's Relation, written c.1620 and describing the early days of Plymouth Colony, has the following mention: "The sachem, or governor of this place, is called Obbatinewat, and though he lives in the bottom of the Massachusetts Bay, yet he is under Massasoit. He used us very kindly; he told us, he durst not then remain in any settled place, for fear of the Tarantines. Also the Squaw Sachem, or Massachusetts queen, was an enemy to him. We told him of divers sachems that had acknowledged themselves to be King James his men, and if he also would submit himself, we would be his safeguard from his enemies, which he did, and went along with us to bring us to the Squaw Sachem."*

On Friday, September 21, the colonists went ashore and marched to a house where Nanepashemet was buried. They remained there and sent Tisquantum and another Indian to find the people. There were signs of hurried removal, but they found the women together with their corn and later a man who was brought trembling to the settlers.

They assured him that they did not intend harm, and he agreed to trade furs with them. Tisquantum urged the colonists to simply "rifle" the women and take their skins on the ground, that "they are a bad people and oft threatned you," but the colonists insisted on treating them fairly.



Peace regime

During the fall of 1621 the Plymouth settlers had every reason to be contented with their condition, less than one year after the "starving times". Bradford expressed the sentiment with biblical allusion that they found "the Lord to be with them in all their ways, and to bless their outgoings and incomings ..." Winslow was more prosaic when he reviewed the political situation with respect to surrounding natives in December 1621: "Wee have found the Indians very faithfull in their Covenant of Peace with us; very loving and readie to pleasure us ...," not only the greatest, Massasoit, "but also all the Princes and peoples round about us" for fifty miles. Even a sachem from Martha's Vineyard, who they never saw, and also seven others came in to submit to King James "so that there is now great peace amongst the Indians themselves, which was not formerly, neither would have bin but for us ..."



Massasoit



Thanksgiving

Bradford wrote in his journal that come fall together with their harvest of Indian corn, they had abundant fish and fowl, including many turkeys they took in addition to venison. He affirmed that the reports of plenty that many report "to their friends in England" were not "feigned but true reports". He did not, however, describe any harvest festival with their native allies. Winslow, however, did, and the letter which was included in Mourt's Relation became the basis for the tradition of "the first Thanksgiving".

(**Note**) *The booklet Mourt's Relation (full title: A Relation or Journal of the Beginning and Proceedings of the English Plantation Settled at Plimoth in New England) was written between November 1620 and November 1621, and describes in detail what happened from the landing of the Mayflower Pilgrims on Cape Cod in Provincetown Harbor through their exploring and eventual settling of Plymouth Colony.*

Winslow's description of what was later celebrated as the first Thanksgiving was quite short. He wrote that after the harvest (of Indian corn, their planting of peas were not worth gathering and their harvest of barley was "indifferent"), Bradford sent out four men fowling "so we might after a more special manner rejoice together, after we had gathered the fruit of our labours ..." The time was one of recreation, including the shooting of arms, and many Natives joined them, including Massasoit and 90 of his men, who stayed three days. They killed five deer which they presented to Bradford, Standish and others in Plymouth. Winslow concluded his description by telling his readers that "we are so farre from want, that we often wish you partakers of our plentie."



The Narragansett threat

The various treaties created a system where the English settlers filled the vacuum created by the epidemic. The villages and tribal networks surrounding Plymouth now saw themselves as tributaries to the English and (as they were assured) King James. The settlers also viewed the treaties as committing the Natives to a form of vassalage.

Nathaniel Morton, Bradford's nephew, interpreted the original treaty with Massasoit, for example, as "at the same time" (not within the written treaty terms) acknowledging himeself "content to become the Subject of our Sovereign Lord the King aforesaid, His Heirs and Successors, and gave unto them all the Lands adjacent, to them and their Heirs for ever".

The problem with this political and commercial system was that it "incurred the resentment of the Narragansett by depriving them of tributaries just when Dutch traders were expanding their activities in the [Narragansett] bay". In January 1622 the Narraganset responded by issuing an ultimatum to the English.

In December 1621 the Fortune (which had brought 35 more settlers) had departed for England. Not long afterwards rumors began to reach Plymouth that the Narragansett were making warlike preparations against the English. Winslow believed that that nation had learned that the new settlers brought neither arms nor provisions and thus in fact weakened the English colony. Bradford saw their belligerency as a result of their desire to "lord it over" the peoples who had been weakened by the epidemic (and presumably obtain tribute from them) and the

colonists were "a bar in their way". In January 1621/22 a messenger from Narraganset sachem Canonicus (who travelled with Tokamahamon, Winslow's "special friend") arrived looking for Tisquantum, who was away from the settlement. Winslow wrote that the messenger appeared relieved and left a bundle of arrows wrapped in a rattlesnake skin.



Rather than let him depart, however, Bradford committed him to the custody of Standish. The captain asked Winslow, who had a "speciall familiaritie" with other Indians, to see if he could get anything out of the messenger. The messenger would not be specific but said that he believed "they were enemies to us." That night Winslow and another (probably Hopkins) took charge of him. After his fear subsided, the messenger told him that the messenger who had come from Canonicus last summer to treat for peace, returned and persuaded the sachem on war. Canonicus was particularly aggrieved by the "meannesse" of the gifts sent him by the English, not only in relation to what he sent to colonists but also in light of his own greatness. On obtaining this information, Bradford ordered the messenger released.

When Tisquantum returned he explained that the meaning of the arrows wrapped in snake skin was enmity; it was a challenge. After consultation, Bradford stuffed the snake skin with powder and shot and had a Native return it to Canonicus with a defiant message. Winslow wrote that the returned emblem so terrified Canonicus that he refused to touch it, and that it passed from hand to hand until, by a circuitous route, it was returned to Plymouth.

Double dealing. Notwithstanding the colonists' bold response to the Narragansett challenge, the settlers realized their defenselessness to attack. Bradford instituted a series of measures to secure Plymouth. Most important they decided to enclose the settlement within a pale (probably much like what was discovered surrounding Nenepashemet's fort). They shut the inhabitants within gates that were locked at night, and a night guard was posted. Standish divided the men into four squadrons and drilled them in where to report in the event of alarm. They also came up with a plan of how to respond to fire alarms so as to have a sufficient armed force to respond to possible Native treachery.

The fence around the settlement required the most effort since it required felling suitable large trees, digging holes deep enough to support the large timbers and securing them close enough to each other to prevent penetration by arrows. This work had to be done in the winter and at a time too when the settlers were on half rations because of the new and unexpected settlers. The work took more than a month to complete.

False alarms. By the beginning of March, the fortification of the settlement had been accomplished. It was now time when the settlers had promised the Massachuset they would come to trade for furs. They received another alarm however, this time from Hobomok, who was still living with them. Hobomok told of his fear that the Massachuset had joined in a confederacy with the Narraganset and if Standish and his men went there, they would be cut off and at the same time the Narraganset would attack the settlement at Plymouth. Hobomok also told them that Tisquantum was part of this conspiracy, that he learned this from other Natives he met in the woods and that the settlers would find this out when Tisquantum would urge the settlers into the Native houses "for their better advantage".

This allegation must have come as a shock to the English given that Tisquantum's conduct for nearly a year seemed to have aligned him perfectly with the English interest both in helping to pacify surrounding societies and in obtaining goods that could be used to reduce their debt to the settlers' financial sponsors.

Bradford consulted with his advisors, and they concluded that they had to make the mission despite this information. The decision was made partly for strategic reasons. If the colonists cancelled the promised trip out of fear and instead stayed shut up "in our new-enclosed towne", they might encourage even more aggression. But the main reason they had to make the trip was that their "Store was almost emptie" and without the corn they could obtain by trading "we could not long subsist ..." The governor therefore deputed Standish and 10 men to make the trip and sent along both Tisquantum and Hobomok, given "the jealousy between them".

Not long after the shallop departed, "an Indian belonging to Squanto's family" came running in. He betrayed signs of great fear, constantly looking behind him as if someone "were at his heels". He was taken to Bradford to whom he told that many of the Narraganset together with Corbitant "and he thought Massasoit" were about to attack Plymouth. Winslow (who was not there but wrote closer to the time of the incident than did Bradford) gave even more graphic details: The Native's face was covered in fresh blood which he explained was a wound he received when he tried speaking up for the settlers.

In this account he said that the combined forces were already at Nemasket and were set on taking advantage of the opportunity supplied by Standish's absence. Bradford immediately put the settlement on military readiness and had the ordnance discharge three rounds in the hope that the shallop had not gone too far. Because of calm seas Standish and his men had just reached Gurnet's Nose, heard the alarm and quickly returned.

When Hobomok first heard the news he "said flatly that it was false ..." Not only was he assured of Massasoit's faithfulness, he knew that his being a pniese meant he would have been consulted by Massasoit before he undertook such a scheme. To make further sure Hobomok volunteered his wife to return to Pokanoket to assess the situation for herself. At the same time Bradford had the watch maintained all that night, but there were no signs of Natives, hostile or otherwise.

Hobomok's wife found the village of Pokanoket quiet with no signs of war preparations. She then informed Massasoit of the commotion at Plymouth. The sachem was "much offended at the carriage of Tisquantum" but was grateful for Bradford's trust in him [Massasoit]. He also sent word back that he would send word to the governor, pursuant to the first article of the treaty they had entered, if any hostile actions were preparing.

Allegations against Tisquantum. Winslow writes that "by degrees wee began to discover Tisquantum," but he does not describe the means or over what period of time this discovery took place. There apparently was no formal proceeding. The conclusion reached, according to Winslow, was that Tisquantum had been using his proximity and apparent influence over the English settlers "to make himselfe great in the eyes of" local Natives for his own benefit.

Winslow explains that Tisquantum convinced locals that he had the ability to influence the English toward peace or war and that he frequently extorted Natives by claiming that the settlers were about to kill them in order "that thereby hee might get gifts to himself to work their peace ..."

Bradford's account agrees with Winslow's to this point, and he also explains where the information came from: "by the former passages, and other things of like nature", evidently referring to rumors Hobomok said he heard in the woods.

Winslow goes much further in his charge, however, claiming that Tisquantum intended to sabotage the peace with Massasoit by false claims of Massasoit aggression "hoping whilest things were hot in the heat of bloud, to provoke us to march into his Country against him, whereby he hoped to kindle such a flame as would not easily be quenched, and hoping if that blocke were once removed, there were no other betweene him and honour" which he preferred over life and peace.

Winslow later remembered "one notable (though) wicked practice of this Tisquantum"; namely, that he told the locals that the English possessed the "plague" buried under their storehouse and that they could unleash it at will. What he referred to was their cache of gunpowder.

Massasoit's demand for Tisquantum. Captain Standish and his men eventually did go to the Massachuset and returned with a "good store of Trade". On their return, they saw that Massasoit was there and he was displaying his anger against Tisquantum. Bradford did his best to appease him, and he eventually departed. Not long afterward, however, he sent a messenger demanding that Tisquantum be put to death.

Bradford responded that although Tisquantum "deserved to die both in respect of him [Massasoit] and us", but said that Tisquantum was too useful to the settlers because otherwise, he had no one to translate. Not long afterward, the same messenger returned, this time with "divers others", demanding Tisquantum. They argued that Tisquantum being a subject of Massasoit, was subject, pursuant to the first article of the Peace Treaty, to the sachem's demand, in effect, rendition. They further argued that if Bradford would not produce pursuant to the Treaty, Massasoit had sent many beavers' skins to induce his consent.

Finally, if Bradford still would not release him to them, the messenger had brought Massasoit's own knife by which Bradford himself could cut off Tisquantum's head and hands to be returned with the messenger. Bradford avoided the question of Massasoit's right under the treaty but refused the beaver pelts saying that "It was not the manner of the English to sell men's lives at a price ..." The governor called Tisquantum (who had promised not to flee), who denied the charges and ascribed them to Hobomok's desire for his downfall. He nonetheless offered to abide by Bradford's decision. Bradford was "ready to deliver him into the hands of his Executioners" but at that instance, a boat passed before the town in the harbor. Fearing that it might be the French, Bradford said he had to first identify the ship before dealing with the demand. The messenger and his companions, however, "mad with rage, and impatient at delay" left "in great heat".



Final mission with the settlers

Arrival of the Sparrow

The ship the English saw pass before the town was not French, but rather a shallop from the Sparrow, a shipping vessel sponsored by Thomas Weston and one other of the Plymouth settlement's sponsors, which was plying the eastern fishing grounds. This boat brought seven additional settlers but no provisions whatsoever "nor any hope of any". In a letter they brought, Weston explained that the settlers were to set up a salt pan operation on one of the islands in the harbor for the private account of Weston. He asked the Plymouth colony, however, to house and feed these newcomers, provide them with seed stock and (ironically) salt, until he was able to send the salt pan to them. The Plymouth settlers had spent the winter and spring on half rations in order to feed the settlers that had been sent nine months ago without provisions.

Now Weston was exhorting them to support new settlers who were not even sent to help the plantation. He also announced that he would be sending another ship that would discharge more passengers before it would sail on to Virginia. He requested that the settlers entertain them in their houses so that they could go out and cut down timber to lade the ship quickly so as not to delay its departure. Bradford found the whole business "but cold comfort to fill their hungry bellies". Bradford was not exaggerating. Winslow described the dire straits. They now were without bread "the want whereof much abated the strength and the flesh of some, and swelled others".

Without hooks or seines or netting, they could not collect the bass in the rivers and cove, and without tackle and navigation rope, they could not fish for the abundant cod in the sea. Had it not been for shellfish which they could catch by hand, they would have perished. But there was more, Weston also informed them that the London backers had decided to dissolve the venture. Weston urged the settlers to ratify the decision; only then might the London merchants send them further support, although what motivation they would then have he did not explain. That boat also, evidently, contained alarming news from the South. John Huddleston, who was unknown to them but captained a fishing ship that had returned from Virginia to the Maine fishing grounds, advised his "good friends at Plymouth" of the massacre in the Jamestown settlements by the Powhatan in which he said 400 had been killed. He warned them: "Happy is he whom other men's harms doth make to beware." This last communication Bradford decided to turn to their advantage. Sending a return for this kindness, they might also seek fish or other provisions from the fishermen. Winslow and a crew were selected to make the voyage to Maine, 150 miles away, to a place they had never been. In Winslow's reckoning, he left at the end of May for Damariscove. Winslow found the fishermen more than sympathetic and they freely gave what they could. Even though this was not as much as Winslow hoped, it was enough to keep them going until the harvest.

When Winslow returned, the threat they felt had to be addressed. The general anxiety aroused by Huddleston's letter was heightened by the increasingly hostile taunts they learned of. Surrounding villagers were "glorying in our weaknesse", and the English heard threats about how "easie it would be ere long to cut us off". Even Massasoit turned cool towards the English, and could not be counted on to tamp down this rising hostility. So they decided to build a fort on burying hill in town. And just as they did when building the palisade, the men had to cut down trees, haul them from the forest and up the hill and construct the fortified building, all with inadequate nutrition and at the neglect of dressing their crops.

Weston's English settlers. They might have thought they reached the end of their problems, but in June 1622 the settlers saw two more vessels arrive, carrying 60 additional mouths to feed. These were the passengers that Weston had written would be unloaded from the vessel going on to Virginia. That vessel also carried more distressing news. Weston informed the governor that he was no longer a part of the company sponsoring the Plymouth settlement. The settlers he sent just now, and requested the Plymouth settlement to house and feed, were for his own enterprise.

The "sixty lusty men" would not work for the benefit of Plymouth; in fact he had obtained a patent and as soon as they were ready they would settle an area in Massachusetts Bay. Other letters also were brought. The other venturers in London explained that they had bought out Weston, and everyone was better off without him. Weston, who saw the letter before it was sent, advised the settlers to break off from the remaining merchants, and as a sign of good faith delivered a quantity of bread and cod to them. (Although, as Bradford noted in the margin, he "left not his own men a bite of bread.") The arrivals also brought news that the Fortune had been taken by French pirates, and therefore all their past effort to export American cargo (valued at £500) would count for nothing.

Finally Robert Cushman sent a letter advising that Weston's men "are no men for us; wherefore I prey you entertain them not"; he also advised the Plymouth Separatists not to trade with them or loan them anything except on strict collateral."I fear these people will hardly deal so well with the savages as they should. I pray you therefore signify to Squanto that they are a distinct body from us, and we have nothing to do with them, neither must be blamed for their faults, much less can warrant their fidelity." As much as all this vexed the governor, Bradford took in the men and fed and housed them as he did the others sent to him, even though Weston's men would compete with his colony for pelts and other Native trade. But the words of Cushman would prove prophetic.

Weston's men, "stout knaves" in the words of Thomas Morton, were roustabouts collected for adventure and they scandalized the mostly strictly religious villagers of Plymouth. Worse, they stole the colony's corn, wandering into the fields and snatching the green ears for themselves. When caught, they were "well whipped", but hunger drove them to steal "by night and day". The harvest again proved disappointing, so that it appeared that "famine must still ensue, the next year also" for lack of seed. And they could not even trade for staples because their supply of items the Natives sought had been exhausted. Part of their cares were lessened when their coasters returned from scouting places in Weston's patent and took Weston's men (except for the sick, who remained) to the site they selected for settlement, called Wessagusset (now Weymouth). But not long after, even there they plagued Plymouth, who heard, from Natives once friendly with them, that Weston's settlers were stealing their corn and committing other abuses. At the end of August a fortuitous event staved off another starving winter: the Discovery, bound for London, arrived from a coasting expedition from Virginia. The ship had a cargo of knives, beads and other items prized by Natives, but seeing the desperation of the colonists the captain drove a hard bargain: He required them to buy a large lot, charged them double their price and valued their beaver pelts at 3s. per pound, which he could sell at 20s. "Yet they were glad of the occasion and fain to buy at any price ..."

Trading expedition with Weston's men. The Charity returned from Virginia at the end of September–beginning of October. It proceeded on to England, leaving the Wessagusset settlers well provisioned. The Swan was left for their use as well. It was not long after they learned that the Plymouth settlers had acquired a store of trading goods that they wrote Bradford proposing that they jointly undertake a trading expedition, they to supply the use of the Swan. They proposed equal division of the proceeds with payment for their share of the goods traded to await arrival of Weston. (Bradford assumed they had burned through their provisions.) Bradford agreed and proposed an expedition southward of the Cape.

Winslow wrote that Tisquantum and Massasoit had "wrought" a peace (although he doesn't explain how this came about). With Tisquantum as guide, they might find the passage among the Monomoy Shoals to Nantucket Sound; Tisquantum had advised them he twice sailed through the shoals, once on an English and once on a French vessel.

The venture ran into problems from the start. When in Plymouth Richard Green, Weston's brother-in-law and temporary governor of the colony, died. After his burial and receiving directions to proceed from the succeeding governor of Wessagusset, Standish was appointed leader but twice the voyage was turned back by violent winds. On the second attempt, Standish fell ill. On his return Bradford himself took charge of the enterprise.

In November they set out. When they reached the shoals, Tisquantum piloted the vessel, but the master of the vessel did not trust the directions and bore up. Tisquantum directed him through a narrow passage, and they were able to harbor near Mamamoycke (now Chatham).

That night Bradford went ashore with a few others, Tisquantum acting as translator and facilitator. Not having seen any of these Englishmen before, the Natives were initially reluctant. But Tisquantum coaxed them and they provided a plentiful meal of venison and other victuals.

They were reluctant to allow the English to see their homes, but when Bradford showed his intention to stay on shore, they invited him to their shelters, having first removed all their belongings. As long as the English stayed, the Natives would disappear "bag and baggage" whenever their possessions were seen.

Eventually Tisquantum persuaded them to trade and as a result, the settlers obtained eight hogsheads of corn and beans. The villagers also told them that they had seen vessels "of good burthen" pass through the shoals. And so, with Tisquantum feeling confident, the English were prepared to make another attempt. But suddenly Tisquantum became ill and died.



Death of Tisquantum (Squanto)

The sickness seems to have greatly shaken Bradford, for they lingered there for several days before he died. Bradford described his death in some detail: In this place Tisquantum fell sick of Indian fever, bleeding much at the nose (which the Indians take as a symptom of death) and within a few days died there; desiring the Governor to pray for him, that he might go to the Englishmen's God in Heaven; and bequeathed sundry of his things to English friends, as remembrances of his love; of whom they had a great loss.

Without Tisquantum to pilot them, the English settlers decided against trying the shoals again and returned to Cape Cod Bay.

The English Separatists were comforted by the fact that Tisquantum had become a Christian convert. William Wood writing a little more than a decade later explained why some of the Ninnimissinuok began recognizing the power of "the Englishmens God, as they call him": "because they could never yet have power by their conjurations to damnifie the English either in body or goods" and since the introduction of the new spirit "the times and seasons being much altered in seven or eight years, freer from lightning and thunder, and long droughts, suddaine and tempestuous dashes of rain, and lamentable cold Winters".

Philbrick speculates that Tisquantum may have been poisoned by Massasoit. His bases for the claim are that other Native Americans had engaged in assassinations during the 17th century; and that Massasoit's own son, Metacomet, may have assassinated John Sassamon, an event that led to the bloody King Philip's War a half-century later.

He suggests that the "peace" Winslow says was lately made between the two could have been a "rouse" but does not explain how Massasoit could have accomplished the feat on the very remote southeast end of Cape Cod, more than 85 miles distant from Pokanoket. Tisquantum is reputed to be buried in the village of Chatham Port.

Historical assessment. Because almost all the historical records of Tisquantum were written by English Separatists and because most of that writing had the purpose to attract new settlers, give account of their actions to their financial sponsors or to justify themselves to co-religionists, they tended to relegate Tisquantum (or any other Native American) to the role of assistant to them in their activities. No real attempt was made to understand Tisquantum or Native culture, particularly religion. The closest that Bradford got in analyzing him was to say "that Tisquantum sought his own ends and played his own game, ... to enrich himself". But in the end, he gave "sundry of his things to sundry of his English friends".



About the Author

Larry W Jones is a songwriter, having penned over 7,700 song lyrics. Published in 22 volumes of island themed, country, cowboy, western and bluegrass songs. The entire assemblage is the world's largest collection of lyrics written by an individual songwriter.

As a wrangler on the "Great American Horse Drive", at age 68, he assisted in driving 800 half-wild horses 62 miles in two days, from Winter pasture grounds in far NW Colorado to the Big Gulch Ranch outside of Craig Colorado.

His book, "The Oldest Greenhorn", chronicles the adventures and perils in earning the "Gate-to-Gate" trophy belt buckle the hard way.



Other books published by Larry W Jones:

A Squirrel Named Julie and The Fox Ridge Fox
The Painting Of A Dream
The Boy With Green Thumbs and The Wild Tree Man
Red Cloud – Chief Of the Sioux
Spotted Tail – The Orphan Negotiator
Little Crow – The Fur Trapper's Patron
Chief Gall – The Strategist
Crazy Horse – The Vision Quest Warrior
Sitting Bull - The Powder River Power
Rain-In-The-Face – The Setting Sun Brave
Two Strike – The Lakota Club Fighter
Chief American Horse – The Oglala Councilor
Chief Dull Knife – The Sharp-Witted Cheyenne
Chief Joseph – Retreat From Grande Ronde
The Oregon Trail Orphans
Kids In Bloom Volume 1
Kids In Bloom Volume 2
Kids Animal Pals Volume 1
Kids Animal Pals Volume 2
Bird Kids Volume 1
Bird Kids Volume 2
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The Jungle Book – Tiger! Tiger!
The Jungle Book – The White Seal
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The Jungle Book – Her Majesty's Servants

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